

# HIGH STAKES TESTING IN K-12 SCHOOLS AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FOCUS

## Introduction

This bibliography begins an ongoing effort to develop a resource for those interested in research on high stakes testing in K-12 schools. The bibliography is a work in progress, is not exhaustive, focuses primarily on empirical research, includes mostly references in the past decade, and includes multiple perspectives on the issues.

Feedback or suggestions for other entries (please send complete citation) for this bibliography should be sent to Sandra Mathison at [smathison@louisville.edu](mailto:smathison@louisville.edu).

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**Note:** A number of people have contributed substantially to the preparation of this bibliography. They include Sandra Mathison, University of Louisville; Melissa Freeman, Kristen Wilcox, Lynee Sauer, University at Albany, SUNY. Preparation of this publication was supported under Grant # ESI-9911868 from the National Science Foundation. The contents do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of NSF.

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## Bibliography

**Airasian, P. W. (1988). Symbolic validation: The case of state-mandated, high-stakes testing. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 10(4), 301 – 13.**

Policies and innovations such as state-mandated, high-stakes testing are not the only possible solutions to the perceived decline in student performance in the United States, but they have received the strongest social support. This article looks at the power of symbolism using state-mandated, high-stakes testing programs as an example of the way in which public values and perceptions give legitimacy and support to certain policies and innovations over others. Three types of symbolic appeal associated with high-stakes, state-mandated testing programs are identified. Such tests have gained wide support because they symbolize order and control, a focus on important outcomes, and a return to basic moral values. The author concludes by considering the impact the belief in testing might have on the public's overall awareness of educational issues.